

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SSC-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /069 W

-----090555Z 081452 /17

R 090419Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2817

INFO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SUVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE WELLINGTON 0849

ALSO FOR INR/OIL/B

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, NZ

SUBJECT: PRIMEMINISTER ANNOUNCES CABINET RESHUFFLE

REF: WELLINGTON 824 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: THE FACES ARE LARGELY UNCHANGED, BUT CABINET RESHUFFLE ANNOUNCED MARCH 8 BY PRIME MINISTER MULDOON SHIFTS PORTFOLIOS OF ENERGY, REVENUE, HOUSING, POST OFFICE, NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG EXISTING CABINET MEMBERS, ELEVATES A DEPUTY TO MINISTERIAL LEVEL AND, WHILE RETAINING THREE OTHER MINISTERS DISPLAYS DISAPPOINTMENT IN THEIR PERFORMANCES BY REMOVING MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES. END SUMMARY.

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: TAKING ADVANTAGE OF DEPARTURE FROM CABINET OF SIR KEITH HOLYOAKE (REFTEL, PRIME MINISTER MULDOON ANNOUNCED MINOR CABINET RESHUFFLE MARCH 8 WHICH LEAVES FACES LARGELY UNCHANGED BUT SOME CABINET RESPONSIBILITIES SIGNIFICANTLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MODIFIED. AS EXPECTED, NO REPLACEMENT WAS MADE FOR SIR KEITH, WHO HELD PORTFOLIO OF MINISTER OF STATE. TOTAL CABINET MEMBERSHIP REMAINS AT TWENTY.

2. SINGLE NEW FACE IS JAMES B. BOLGER, FORTY YEAR OLD M.P. FROM KING COUNTRY AND UNTIL MARCH 8 UNDERSECRETARY TO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

AND FISHERIES. BOLGER NOW BECOMES MINISTER
OF FISHERIES AND ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE.
DUNCAN MAC INTYRE RETAINS PORTFOLIOS OF AGRICULTURE,
MAORI AFFAIRS AND RURAL BANKING AND FINANCE CORPORATION.

3. MINISTER OF BROADCASTING, HUGH TEMPLETON, HAS BEEN
PROMOTED TO ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF FINANCE, RETAINS
BROADCASTING PORTFOLIO AND ALSO BECOMES MINISTER IN CHARGE
OF INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT, MINISTER OF
STATISTICS AND MINISTER IN CHARGE OF FRIENDLY
SOCIETIES. AS ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF FINANCE, TEMPLETON
WILL BE PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S RIGHT-HAND-MAN IN
FINANCIAL FIELD.

4. GEORGE F. GAIR, HAS SHED HIS PORTFOLIOS OF HOUSING
AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF FINANCE. GROUPED AROUND HIM INSTEAD
WILL BE PORTFOLIOS OF ENERGY RESOURCES, ELECTRICITY AND
MINES, TOGETHER WITH REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO WHICH
HE ORIGINALLY HELD, AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PREVIOUSLY
HELD BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TALBOYS.

5. ERIC S. F. HOLLAND HAS LOST ALL OF HIS PREVIOUS
RESPONSIBILITIES AND ASSUMES FROM GAIR THE SOLE
PORTFOLIO OF HOUSING.

6. PETER I. WILKINSON RETAINS PORTFOLIOS OF ATTORNEY-
GENERAL AND CUSTOMS AND GAINS FROM TEMPLETON THE POST
OFFICE.

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7. COMMENTING ON CHANGES, PRIME MINISTER MULDOON SAID
HE DID NOT ENVISAGE FURTHER CABINET RESHUFFLE BEFORE
1978 ELECTIONS BUT NEITHER DID HE RULE OUT
POSSIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL SHIFTS.

8. COMMENT: BEGIN LOU: RESHUFFLE ANNOUNCED BY PRIME
MINISTER WAS NOT NEARLY THE MAJOR SHIFT RUMORED AND
EXPECTED BY MANY OBSERVERS. THIS HAS LED TO SPECULATION,
DESPITE PRIME MINISTER'S ASSERTIONS TO CONTRARY,
THAT FURTHER SIGNIFICANT RESUFFLE, INCLUDING SEVERAL
RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENTS, WILL COME BEFORE 1978.
FOR PRESENT, IT IS CLEAR THAT MARCH 8 ANNOUNCEMENT AMOUNTS
TO FINDING OF DISPLEASURE BY MULDOON FOR PAST PERFORMANCE
OF HOLLAND, WILKINSON AND MAC INTYRE. TEMPLETON AND
BOLGER HAVE BEEN PROMOTED AND GAIR SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN
MOVED SIDeways, RETAINING HIS LUSTER AS A RISING
NATIONAL STAR. END COMMENT.
SELDEN

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 09-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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